

**TDVS Partnership with the National Veterans Legal Services Program
Fact Sheet
August 27, 2019**

The Tennessee Department of Veterans Services (TDVS) is proud to announce a new partnership with the National Veterans Legal Services Program (NVLSP). This partnership will greatly enhance the scope of appellate advocacy that TDVS is able to provide to Tennessee veterans.

NVLSP is a non-profit organization of attorneys with advanced advocacy skills and extensive knowledge of the workings of the Department of Veterans Affairs and Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims. Since 1981, NVLSP has helped veterans obtain over five billion dollars in disability benefits.

What does this partnership do?

NVLSP has agreed to review adverse decisions issued by the Board of Veterans' Appeals (BVA) in order to determine if there is an appealable error. If NVLSP finds that the BVA wrongly denied a benefit or benefits that a TDVS veteran rightfully deserves, NVLSP will offer representation of that veteran at the next appellate level -- the United States Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims (CAVC). NVLSP will provide this representation at no cost to the veteran or claimant.

Who Is Impacted?

Veterans or claimants represented by TDVS that have received a denial from the Board of Veterans' Appeals.

This agreement extends only to veterans and claimants that are represented by TDVS. It does not apply to Tennessee veterans that are represented by another service organization, such as The American Legion or VFW, which TDVS supports.

NVLSP has begun reviewing adverse decisions issued by the BVA dated July 1, 2019 or later.

How will a veteran or claimant know if NVLSP has found an appealable error?

NVLSP will send the veteran or claimant a written offer to provide free representation at CAVC. This offer will be sent to the mailing address that the Veterans Benefits Administration has on file. The offer will be from NVLSP, but it will include an introductory letter from the Tennessee Department of Veterans Services.



In addition, TDVS will be notified when NVLSP sends their written offer, so we can address any concerns that veterans have.

Practical Considerations

You do not need to take any action. This review will occur without a veteran, claimant or representative needing to take any action.

TDVS does not have control over which veterans are selected. NVLSP will conduct an independent review of BVA denials and make their own decision as to whether they will offer representation at CAVC.

NVLSP will review all BVA denials for TDVS veterans, but will not offer representation to all of them. You may want to consider the fact that not all veterans will be selected before disseminating this information to all of your TDVS veterans. We do not know yet what percentage of cases will be selected.

Who can I contact if I have questions about this agreement or its impact?

Please contact TDVS's Department Counsel, Kathryn Held at 615-695-6385 or Kathryn.held@tn.gov.